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PCAccent for February 2009- Vol. 2 No. 1
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Welcome to PCAccent. This newsletter is an adjunct, an "accent" if you will, to the PCA's Web site and the PENnant. The Board of Directors will use PCAccent to keep you informed about PCA news and happenings.

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO THIS NEWSLETTER! For comments or questions, send email to PCA President Carla Mortensen. To subscribe or unsubscribe, please send email to Membership Coordinator Kim Sosin. Email addresses for Carla and Kim can be found on the PCA's Web site:

<http://pencollectorsofamerica.com/>

If you have news that would benefit our members, please send an email to Deb Kinney - debkinney@alumni.duke.edu, the PCAccent Editor.

*** Message from the President - Carla Mortensen ***

The Board of Directors of the PCA is delighted to announce the launch of our newly re-designed member website. This project has been in the works for the better part of a year, and we hope it will provide members and non-members alike with information and ideas to help keep our hobby vibrant and growing.

Key to this effort, the new PCA website has been developed using special software designed for creating digital archives and online communities. Unlike a static website, which is only viewed by its visitors, the PCA site will provide its members with opportunities for interaction, exchange, communication, and contribution.

** The more members take advantage of these opportunities and contribute their own materials, sites, and expertise, the more the site will grow and benefit the entire collecting community. ** Like the message boards we all now use, the information will be immediately available to users, but the major improvement is that the postings will be available and searchable forever in a clear, easy-to-access format.

Located at www.pencollectorsofamerica.com, here is an overview of the site's offerings.

Reference Library - members can download digital copies of PCA materials that have been scanned from originals. Members can also help develop the library by contributing their own materials.

PENnant Archive - members will be able to view searchable contents of past issues of the PENnant, download high-quality digitized versions, and contribute articles to future issues.

Discussion Forum - members can exchange comments and knowledge about their collecting interests, and they can help and be helped by other collectors.

Web Bookmarks - members can submit web-based resources directly to the PCA site, and the site will assign a thumbnail of their submission so that the resource has visual representation.

Show Calendar - the calendar has already been populated with all the major pen shows for 2009, and members can post their own local club meetings as well.

The site was developed by Dr. Barry Eckhouse, collector and PCA member. Barry worked closely with the PCA Board to insure a site that would serve the organization's members and one that would grow through the efforts of its membership. Barry is a Professor of Rhetoric at Saint Mary's College (California), where he teaches and studies the use of emerging technologies in web-based communities. His collecting interests include Chilton, Conklin, and Waterman's.

We hope this new website will prove to be a wonderful part of your collecting "library." Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any difficulties on this site.

*** Membership - Kim Sosin ***

Many of our members have discovered our new website at <http://www.pencollectorsofamerica.com> and are enjoying the members' access to membership information and library reference materials. The membership information is now in a member database that encourages members to manage their own PCA information and online profiles to keep them current. The website will also remind members when it is time to renew. However, the website registration functions require an email address, so it is more important than ever to provide us with your email address. If you are receiving this newsletter directly from PCA, then you are a current PCA member with an email address on file in our database. You can easily register for website participation by opening the MEMBERS tab, selecting the FAQs, and reading "Website Registration for members who provided an e-mail address." Please be assured that all of your registration information, including your email address, is confidential.

Memberships without email addresses: If you know a current member who joined before February 10th without providing an email address and who might like to provide us with an email address so they can register for the website, please ask them to use the "Membership" link in the "Contact" menu to send us the email address. Email addresses added this way will have to be added manually, so please be patient while we insert it into the database.

New Members: For *new* members who joined after February 10th and did not provide an email address, Kim Svabik, the PCA Board Assistant, will send the you information on how to access and update your profile by adding your email address. Because this newsletter only goes to those who have provided email addresses, we ask your help in spreading the word to PCA members who might not have received this. Of course, if someone cannot provide an email address, we will continue to manage his or her membership data.

Joining and Renewing: Finally, if you know someone who would like to join PCA, please ask them to go to the website to both join the organization and to register for the website. The FAQs will explain how to do that online by using Paypal or mailing a check. And when it is time for you to renew, of course that is very easily done on the website and will be immediately reflected in the membership database.

Los Angeles Pen Show: The PCA was represented at the LA Pen Show with our booth and Board Assistant, Kim Svabik. She enjoyed talking to many members and prospective members. We thank each of you who stopped to visit. She also signed up 9 renewals and 16 new members and was able to show off the website. We thank the show sponsors for providing PCA with a table at the show, time for our Pens for Kids seminar, and posters and handouts. We had 20 kids participate in our Passport Scavenger Hunt and 13 attended the seminar. It was a great turnout. There was one new member in particular who was so excited to be at the show she took pictures with everyone from David Oscarrson to Kim Svabik at the PCA table. The show was a great success for the PCA and the LA show organizers.

*** Wanderings ***

Rick Propas is currently on leave, teaching and traveling in the UK and throughout Europe. Someday, like in June, he will return, and may resume making trouble within the pen community.

*** PENnant News - Richard Jarvis ***

The next issue of The PENnant is proceeding toward the press and will feature the final installment of the Diamond Point story as well as a nice piece on Sheaffer plunger fillers from Gerald Berg.

As always, if you have ideas or complete articles please contact the Managing Editor Richard Jarvis at wordherder62@gmail.com

*** Pens for Kids - Linda Bauer ***

Thanks to Ralph Stillwell for leading a great Pens for Kids workshop at the LA Pen show in February. It was the first PFK workshop in LA, and it was standing room only.

You can support the future of pen collecting with a contribution to the

PCA Pens for Kids program. Pens for Kids promotes handwriting and pen collecting to the next generation. We conduct workshops for kids and families at the national pen shows and also provide resources for PCA members who want to give classroom presentations in their local schools.

Every kid that attends a PFK workshop gets their own fountain pen, thanks to the generous donations of pen collectors, pen dealers and others who want to cultivate the next generation of pen users and collectors. A recent Newsweek magazine columnist wrote of the "Curse of Cursive," and advocated doing away with handwriting all together.

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/184751>

You can counteract that sentiment with a donation of student pens to the PCA, or cash so that we may purchase pens for kids. Your donation is tax-deductible.

Contact Linda Bauer, Thepenlady@comcast.net for details on how to donate.

*** Volunteer Opportunities - Deb Kinney ***

Please let me know if you have local pen club news you want the members to know, like meeting dates/times, etc.

debkinney@alumni.duke.edu

Do you have some time and talent to help the PCA be all that it can be?

If so, please contact our outreach coordinator, Allan Quiat, e-mail abquiat@yahoo.com, and let us know what you are interested in doing. Opportunities abound in the areas of membership, Pens for Kids (at the shows), PENnant article generation, etc. Let us hear from you!

Upcoming Pen Shows

Now you can view all upcoming pen shows on our new site:

http://www.pencollectorsofamerica.com/index.php?option=com_events&Itemid=37

Nothing says "I love you" like a free membership to the PCA.

<http://pencollectorsofamerica.com/index.php?>